update

Vol. 4, no. 4, 19 February 1991
Published by the Division of Information, United Nations Development Programme, One UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017

news and events:

New York. UNDP's Division for Global and Interregional Programmes (DGIP) participated in a meeting on 3-5 February which discussed plans for developing improved vaccines to immunize the world's children. Organized by the Rockefeller Foundation, the gathering brought together members of the Consultative Group for the Children's Vaccine Initiative, established during the September 1990 World Summit for Children in New York.

The Vaccine Initiative will not produce a "magic bullet" or develop one vaccine to prevent all infectious diseases. But it is intended to improve existing vaccines and introduce essential new ones. With universal immunization using current vaccines, two to three million more deaths could be prevented annually. Development of new vaccines against diseases could save another five to six million lives a year during this decade.

The immediate aim of the Consultative Group is to mobilize support for development of new and improved vaccines. These vaccines will be more affordable, easier to administer, require fewer doses, and have broader antigenic coverage.

The Consultative Group is comprised of bilateral donors, experts from the science and medical communities, and representatives from the Rockefeller Foundation, the World Health Organization, UNDP, UNICEF and the World Bank.

Geneva. The four founding organizations which launched the Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP) are convening a meeting here on 6-8 March to discuss objectives and options to strengthen and revamp the TFAP. When the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Bank, the World Resources Institute and UNDP initiated the TFAP in 1985, they diagnosed the main causes of deforestation and prescribed strategies for reforestation and forest management. They also called for widespread political commitment to save the tropical forests.

Several recent reviews, however, concluded that the TFAP is not fulfilling its original objectives. The meeting next month will discuss reformulating the scope of the original initiative and decide on new means for ensuring effective implementation and monitoring of a revised programme. Representatives from developing country and donor governments, international agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector will be invited.

New York. UNDP Administrator William H. Draper III addressed a group of 31 newly-appointed ambassadors to the United Nations on 29 January at UNDP headquarters. The briefing covered UNDP's current programmes and policies.

Mr. Draper spoke about the 1991 Human Development Report which will present a new "human freedom index." This yardstick uses 40 tests of a country's behaviour to measure the personal liberty of its citizens. The Report will also rate governments on a "human development index," an indicator which includes life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rates and purchasing power.

Mr. Draper discussed recent examples of challenges which drew UNDP into new and unusual development roles. He cited UNDP's involvement in Haiti's electoral process, and its relief co-ordination for the 200,000 refugees who came to Jordan at the start of the war in the Middle East.

The ambassadors heard policy and programme presentations from UNDP Associate Administrator Luis Maria Gomez, and representatives from the Bureaux for Resources and Special Activities, Finance and Administration, Programme Policy and Evaluation, the Policy Co-ordination Unit and the Office for Project Services. Following a panel discussion, the ambassadors were briefed on activities in the regional bureaux.

Dakar. An agreement was signed here on 9 February between UNDP, the World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB)

which launched the African Capacity Building Initiative (ACBI). The Initiative is intended to build professional policy analysis and development management skills in sub-Saharan Africa. Many African countries, presently engaged in economic reforms, urgently need to build local proficiency in analyzing and managing their economic policies and programmes.

The basic purpose of ACBI is to create a cadre of professional African policy analysts and economic experts who will be equipped to manage the development process. One principal objective is to place investment in human resources and institutions high on the agenda of African governments and donors. Donor support for economic policy research and management in the region will also be better co-ordinated and streamlined through ACBI.

Nearly $80 million for ACBI has been pledged by donors including Canada, Finland, France, Sweden, UK and the US. The amount includes support from the principal sponsors: UNDP, AfDB and the World Bank. Donors will also be contributing to ACBI through co-financing arrangements. In addition, they may design and implement their own capacity-building activities and link them as associated programmes to ACBI.

Brussels. January 1991 marked the premier of AZIMUTHS, a 30-minute monthly TV programme sponsored by UNDP. Produced in English, French and Spanish by UNDP's Geneva office, the series covers human interest stories involving UNDP projects throughout the developing world and is intended to appeal to a broad general public. It is produced and directed by Josy Dubié, an award-winning documentary film maker, formerly with Belgian television.

The first show began with a segment on Haiti's struggle to ensure human rights. Next came a portrait of crocodile farming in Papua New Guinea, aimed at saving an endangered species while providing income for small farmers. The final vignette looked at Madagascar's effort to turn its rich store of medicinal plants to economic advantage.

The series, which consists of 10 half-hour programmes a year, each made up of three or four features, is initially being broadcast throughout Europe, in Canada, and in Francophone African and Arab countries. Enquiries should be directed to Jean Fabre, Chief, Information Section, UNDP, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. (FAX: 41 22 798-75-24)

projects approved by the action committee

(all approvals subject to modification; sums quoted in US dollars)

16 January 1991

Bangladesh. This project is helping the government to carry out primary education reform. The effort is a direct response to the push for global education that was endorsed by the 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand. Textbooks, teaching guides and instructional aids for a new primary school curriculum will be produced. Teacher training packages related to the new curriculum will be developed. Within the Ministry of Education, an evaluation and research unit will be set up to assess the progress of new teaching approaches. Proposed UNDP contribution: $2,299,200 for consultants in primary education curriculum development and evaluation, fellowships, equipment and training for 3,000 teacher trainers. Government executed and implemented by the Ministry of Education. (BGD/88/040)

Bangladesh. A country faced with high food grain import bills, Bangladesh seeks to increase the yield of crops under irrigation by introducing new agricultural techniques, improving farm extension services and promoting crop diversification. To achieve these objectives, demonstration plots using improved farming practices will be set up in selected districts or *upazilas*. Local authorities and NGOs will be encouraged to provide farmer support services. Results from field-testing will be channeled to research institutions for identifying new varieties of rice and maize suitable for cultivation in different parts of the country. Proposed UNDP contribution: $4,030,400 for experts in rice production technology, agronomists, study tours and technical equipment for the demonstration plots. Executed by FAO and implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture. (BGD/89/045)

a t e

Benin. To ease the social impact of its structural adjustment programme, the government launched a large-scale project aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and increasing employment opportunities. Previous assistance helped establish two institutions which provide technical and financial services to small- and medium-sized enterprises. This project will provide training support to these two centres. It is expected to strengthen 40 small and medium-sized businesses, create 240 new ones and provide 1,500 new jobs. Proposed UNDP contribution: $3,525,975 for experts, training and logistical support. Executed by UNDP's Office for Project Services (UNDP/OPS) and implemented by the Inter-Ministerial Sub-Commission for Economic Environment. (BEN/88/009)

Lesotho. Lesotho is a mountainous country with scarce natural resources and vast tracts of agriculturally unproductive land. Ninety per cent of its 1.6 million people live in rural areas. Due to evolving political changes, the anticipated influx of thousands of miners returning from neighbouring South Africa poses a serious threat to an economy that is already beset by a 30 per cent unemployment rate. In an effort to build more income and employment opportunities, the government has focused on promoting agriculture and rural development. UNDP will provide UN Volunteers (UNVs) to assist rural communities in planning self-help initiatives. UNV specialists will also help government authorities and NGOs to co-ordinate and manage small-scale grassroots activities. Proposed UNDP contribution: $2,580,000 for UNVs, subcontracts, training, equipment and a grassroots initiative fund. Executed by UNV and implemented by the Ministry of Planning, Economic and Manpower Development. (LES/90/003)

Madagascar. The project aims to reduce poverty and improve the income of poor people who were adversely affected by structural adjustment programmes implemented in the 1980s. This effort is supporting a government drive to expand labour-intensive production and enhance investment programmes at the grassroots level. Communities in 10 selected districts will receive technical and financial assistance for small-scale business initiatives. Proposed UNDP contribution: $5,207,000 for experts, subcontracts, training and equipment. Executed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in co-operation with other technical agencies of the United Nations. Implemented by the Ministry for Civil Service and Labour. (MAG/89/017)

Mauritania. UNDP's Management Development Programme will help the government to expand its economic recovery plan. Emphasis will be on upgrading auditing skills and improving management capabilities in the Ministry of Planning. Training in other government ministries will better equip the country to manage its long-term development initiatives. Proposed UNDP contribution: $587,000 for an economist, consultants, training and equipment. Executed by the UN Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (UN/DTCD) and implemented by the Ministry of Planning. (MAU/90/501)

Zambia. In July 1990 the Zambian government received $500 million in donor support for its new structural adjustment programme. To ensure successful implementation of economic reforms and an effective use of external aid, UNDP is helping to strengthen government management. It will assist in developing a national policy on external assistance. An information exchange system for aid flows will also be set up at the Ministry of Finance and in planning divisions of sectoral ministries. Eleven officials will receive training in aid co-ordination, and five will be taught to design and use the information exchange system. Proposed UNDP contribution: $1,058,000 for an adviser, data processing expert, a macro-economist, training and workshops. Executed by UNDP/OPS and implemented by the National Co-ordination and Development Planning Office. (ZAM/90/004)

9 January 1991

Ethiopia. Field explorations reveal a high mineral potential in the Adola area of southern Ethiopia. Under this project, a geophysical air survey will be conducted over 3,000 square kilometres to identify

READEX FICHE

further areas for mineral development. Survey findings will be used to devise a mining development plan and an investment campaign. Forty geoscientists will receive training in advanced mineral exploration techniques. More than a dozen will be trained in such fields as metallurgy, chemistry and mineral economics. Proposed UNDP contribution: $4,569,000 for a geophysical air survey subcontract, training, fellowships and equipment. Government-executed and implemented by the Ethiopian Institute of Geological Surveys. (ETH/90/009)

Libya. Reliable data on land resources is critical for development planning in the agriculture sector. The establishment of an Agricultural Resource Information Centre and a computerized database on the country's natural resources will enhance agricultural planning and land-use mapping capabilities. Proposed UNDP contribution: $330,000. Government cost-sharing: $3,402,370. Funds are to be used for a land resource specialist, consultants, training, computers and equipment covering remote sensing and surveying. Executed by FAO and implemented by the Secretariat for Agriculture Reclamation. (LIB/89/001)

Mozambique. Additional technical support will be provided to the National Institute for Agronomic Research (INIA) to strengthen expertise in agricultural research and technology. Special attention will be given to applying agricultural research to the needs of farmers. The aim is to enable INIA to rely on its own technical staff, rather than on foreign expertise, to conduct research on maize, sorghum and plant protection. Proposed UNDP contribution: $3,993,644 for research specialists, an agronomist, training and equipment. Executed by FAO and implemented by INIA. (MOZ/86/009)

Yemen. A community-based pilot project aimed at fighting environmental degradation and promoting agricultural development along the Iryan and Al Dar areas of the Wadi Zabid Catchment will be initiated under this project. Local communities will be assisted with reforestation and conservation measures designed to restore vegetation and enhance crop yields in these areas. Proposed UNDP contribution: $3,291,938 for consultants, training and equipment. Executed by UNDP/OPS and implemented by the Technical Secretariat of the High Water Council. (YEM/90/009)

Zambia. UNDP is supporting a government programme of administrative reforms to improve Zambia's civil service. A Management Development Unit will be created in the Cabinet Office, and the National Institute of Public Administration will be strengthened. The long-range purpose is to increase the competitiveness and efficiency of the public sector. Funds of $1 million from UNDP's Management Development Programme will be used for experts in public management, consultancies, workshops and equipment. Executed by UNDP/OPS and implemented by the Cabinet Office, Office of the President. (ZAM/89/501)

United Nations
Development Programme
One UN Plaza,
New York, NY 10017